



A Checklist for Journal Selection

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Selecting a Journal

When considering journals to publish your work in, you should be able to answer 'yes' to the following questions:

1. Does your topic fit the journal's **themes**?
2. Does its **audience** include the people you want to read your work?
3. Does it have a **peer-review** process?
4. Is it **indexed** on reliable platforms like Scopus or the Web of Science?
5. Does its **impact factor** suggest your work will get high exposure?
6. Are its **publication timelines** a reasonable and acceptable length?
7. Are its **publication costs and accessibility** well-explained and manageable?
8. Is it **credible and non-predatory**?

The most important of these questions is whether the journal you are considering is predatory. **Predatory journals** charge exploitative open-access publication fees without providing the editing and peer-review that maintain quality in research.

Thankfully, the research community has put together many resources to help you avoid predatory journals. In this document we build on a popular checklist created by [Think.Check.Submit](#).*



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Identifying Predatory Journals

Do you or your colleagues know the journal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you, your colleagues, or your supervisors read any articles in the journal before?• Is it easy to discover the latest papers in the journal?
Can you easily identify and contact the publisher?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the publisher's name clearly displayed on the journal website?• Can you contact the publisher by telephone, email, and post?
Is the journal clear about the type of peer review it uses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the journal explain whether it uses open, single-blind, or double-blind peer review?• Does the journal explain its review process?
Are articles indexed in services that you use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the journal indexed in the Web of Science, SCOPUS, or any other credible indexing service?
Does the journal have a clearly defined scope?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is it clear what the journal will and won't publish?• Do the papers published reflect the journal's stated scope?
Is the language on its website grammatical and professional?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the journal careful, grammatical, and professional in its use of language on its website and in its communications?
Are the publishing timelines and acceptance rates realistic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the journal's expected time from submission to publication leave enough time for rigorous peer review?• Does the journal's acceptance rate suggest it is selective?
Do the articles show high editorial standards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are the articles published on the journal grammatical, factual, and well-edited?
Is it clear what fees will be charged?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the journal's site explain what these fees are for and when they will be charged?

Do you recognize the editorial board?

- Have you heard of the editorial board members?
- Do the editorial board mention the journal on their own websites?

Is the publisher a member of a recognized industry initiative?

- Do they belong to the [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\)](#)?
- If the journal is open access, is it listed in the [Directory of Open Access Journals \(DOAJ\)](#)?
- If the journal is open access, does the publisher belong to the [Open Access Scholarly Publishers' Association \(OASPA\)](#)?
- Is the journal hosted on one of [INASP's Journals Online](#) platforms or on [African Journals Online](#)?
- Is the publisher a member of another trade association?

Other Resources

Useful resources you can use to identify predatory journals include:

- **Beall's List.** An online list of high-risk [publishers](#) and [journals](#) created by the librarian who coined the term “predatory journal.” You can also download [the criteria](#) the website uses to identify predatory journals.
- **Stop Predatory Journals.** Another online list of high-risk [publishers](#) and [journals](#) which has continued expanding since the original Beall's List was archived.
- **Loyola Marymount University's Journal Evaluation Tool.** A downloadable [worksheet](#) that helps you determine whether a journal you are interested engages in activity linked to predatory journals.

These training materials are provided as part of the Mawazo Learning Exchange, a professional development platform for African researchers. The Mawazo Learning Exchange is a programme of the Mawazo Institute, a non-profit research organisation based in Nairobi, Kenya. Mawazo's mission is to support the next generation of female thought leaders and scholars in Africa, and get policymakers and the public engaged with their research.



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